

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 8, 11, 12, and 30-33 were rejected. Also, claims 4-7, 9 and 10 were objected to. By the present Response, claims 1, 3, 5, 8 and 30 are amended. Claims 2, 4, 9-12 are canceled. New claims 36-40 are added. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1, 3, 5-8, 30-33, and 36-40 will be pending in the present patent application. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are requested in light of the above amendments and in view of the arguments herein below.

Objections to the Title.

Applicants have noted that the Examiner has objected to the title of the invention as not being descriptive and has requested a new title that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. Applicants have reviewed the title and believe that the title is commensurate with the scope of the claims. If the Examiner can suggest a more descriptive title, Applicants would be amenable to an appropriate change in the title.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3, 8, 12, 30 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,443,901 (hereinafter "Fraser"). Further claims 1-3, 8, 12, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,450,498 (hereinafter "Whitehead"). Claims 1, 2, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,025,951 (hereinafter "Swart"). Claims 1, 2, 8, 11, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication US2002/0125790 (hereinafter "Horning").

However, the Examiner indicated that claims 4-7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the recitations of claims 2 and 4.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 2 and 4 have been canceled. Also, claims 3, 5 and 8 are amended to correct dependency.

Furthermore, the Examiner indicated that claims 9 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. New claim 36 has been added that includes all the elements of original claims 1, 2 and 9. Accordingly, Applicants submit that new claim 36 is in condition for allowance. Claims 9-12 have been canceled.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 8 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Swart in view of U.S. Patent 6,785,039 (hereinafter "Wendland"). Further, claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Swart in view of U.S. Patent 6,735,008 (hereinafter "Brophy"). Claims 8, 11 and 31 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Whitehead in view of U.S. Patent 6,836,029 (hereinafter "Greenberg"). Also, claim 32 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Whitehead in view of U.S. Patent 5,600,610 (hereinafter "Hill"). Claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Whitehead in view of G.B. Patent 2,076,970 (hereinafter "Eaton").

Claims 8 and 11 are believed to be patentable as they depend from allowable independent claim 1. In addition, claims 31-33 are believed to be patentable as they depend from allowable independent claim 30.

New claims 36-40

By the present response, Applicants submit new claims 36-40, of which only claims 36 and 40 are independent. Claim 36 recites subject matter similar to that of original claims 1, 2 and 9, as mentioned above. Consequently, claim 36 and its dependent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Also, claim 40 recites subject matter similar to that of original claims 2, 9 and 30. In a similar fashion, claim 40 is believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the reasons summarized above with respect to claim 9. Their consideration and allowance are requested.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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